

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA

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SUBJECT: PLOVDIV FAIR - VIP PARTICIPATION

REF: A) STATE 182894; B) SOFIA 1446

1. REFTEL COMES AS SHOCK BECAUSE WE HAD ASSUMED THAT USIA, COMMERCE AND STATE WERE FAR ADVANCED IN SECURING HIGH-LEVEL US PERSONAGE TO OFFICIATE AT AMERICA DAY IN PLOVDIV SEPT 6 (SEE PARA 3 WHY DATE CANNOT BE CHANGED). THIS IS NOT ONLY AN OPPORTUNITY TO SUPPORT AMERICAN BUSINESS AND TO IMPROVE OUR RELATIONS GENERALLY BUT ALSO PROVIDES PLATFORM AND AUDIENCE FOR A SPEECH WHICH CAN PUT ACROSS OUR VIEWS (A RARE OCCASION HERE). OUR RECORDS INDICATE THAT THE ONLY TIME WE HAVE NOT HAD A VIP AT AMERICA DAY WAS FOLLOWING THE INVASION OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA WHEN WE PULLED OUT OF THE FAIR ALTOGETHER. FAILURE TO COME UP WITH A VIP THIS YEAR COULD THUS BE BADLY MISINTERPRETED BY THE BULGARIANS.

2. IN PAST YEARS, WHEN WE DID NOT HAVE A COMMERCIAL EXHIBIT, US WAS REPRESENTED BY PERSONAGES SUCH AS GOVERNOR MEYNER, SENATOR SCOTT AND CONGRESSMEN ERLEMBORN AND CEDERBERG. OTHER COUNTRIES (LEAVING ASIDE THE SOVIETS AND EE'S WHO NATURALLY HAVE HIGH-LEVEL REPRESENTATION) HAVE SUCH PERSONS AS PRESIDENT OR DIRECTOR

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GENERAL OF FRENCH FOREIGN TRADE CENTER; JUNIOR MINISTER

(NUMBER THREE MAN) OF BRITISH MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE;
VICE PRESIDENT OF AUSTRIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE; FRG MAY
EVEN HAVE ITS MINISTER OF ECONOMICS IN PLOVDIV.

3. FAILURE TO HAVE AN AMERICAN VIP ON OUR DAY WOULD BE
INTERPRETED AS LESSENED US INTEREST AT THE VERY TIME WHEN
SO MUCH IMPORTANT WORK HAS BEEN DONE TO GET A REALLY GOOD
US EXHIBIT, INVOLVING SUBSTANTIAL EXPENDITURE OF FUNDS AND
EFFORTS ON THE PART OF ALL CONCERNED WASHINGTON AGENCIES.
IT IS OUT OF THE QUESTION THAT WE POSTPONE AMERICA DAY.
WE HAVE SENT OUT MORE THAN 500 INVITATIONS, MANY OF THEM
OUT OF TOWN, AND BESIDES SEPT 8 IS SUNDAY FOLLOWED BY
TWO-DAY HOLIDAY WHEN ALL BULGARIANS OF ANY CONSEQUENCE
WILL BE CELEBRATING 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE REGIME.

4. WE WOULD OF COURSE WARMLY WELCOME PRESENCE OF ASSIST-
ANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE PANTOS IF HE CAN BE IN PLOVDIV
SEPTEMBER 6 AFTERNOON. FROM A TRAVEL POINT OF VIEW THIS
SHOULD NOT BE IMPOSSIBLE SINCE THERE IS AEROFLOT FLIGHT
FROM MOSCOW ARRIVING SOFIA 1010 HOURS THAT DAY, AS
WELL AS BALKAN AIR FLIGHT ARRIVING SOFIA 1300 HOURS.
IF THIS CREATES DIFFICULTY WE HOPE VERY MUCH THAT
MAJOR EFFORT CAN BE MADE TO GET US SOMEONE WHOSE
STATURE WILL DEMONSTRATE IMPORTANCE THAT US ATTACHES
TO IMPROVING RELATIONS, INCLUDING COMMERCIAL, WITH
BULGARIA.
HERZ

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